



Press reviews for the The Waitstaff's 2010 Philadelphia Fringe
Festival show: **The Real Housewives of South Philly**

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- Wendy Rosenfield

The Real Housewives of South Philly. There are two sets of Real Philly Housewives vying for your attention this Fringe, neither of which is actually real, one whose show is improvised, and the other, reviewed here, who exist in sketch comedy.

A creation of the Waitstaff comedy troupe, these three Housewives sit on a stoop, yell at the neighbors, congratulate one another when a niece "moves up" in the world from Second and Tasker to Eighth and Shunk, and wrestle with the oral contortions of a Philly accent (tip: it's all about upper-lip placement).

The Housewives make several appearances, among sketches featuring their husbands, drama coach Uta Häagen-Dazs, and an extended riff on the "Lesbians Who Look Like Justin Bieber" Tumblr blog. The evening is custom-tailored for the Fringe, with most scenes sneaking in a jab or two (a Rent spoof with two artists promoting their shows is particularly funny) at the festival, its participants, or the unwitting public.

Domenick Scudera directs the show with a light hand; it's breezy, fun, and fast-paced. While the supplementary sketches are intermittently successful, the Housewives - and Gerre Garrett's curler-haired Duchess in particular, the sole Housewife with all her vowel phonemes properly stretched to fit our regional lilt - are the evening's true laugh-out-loud stars.



The Real Housewives of South Philly

CP Review:

An adroit skewering of pretentious thespians, the Fringe Festival (not that the two are mutually exclusive) and South Philly society (if it may be so called), this show is a fine-tuned hoot. The headline characters, a trio of foul-mouthed housewives, bicker and gossip and head off to the viewing of recently deceased friend “to get something to eat.” One bit features a send-up of the Tea Party movement that I daren’t spoil. Recurring themes weave in and out and punch lines fly. There’s a whopper at the end. Maybe you saw it coming, but it’s still funny. —**Deni Kasrel**

Philadelphia Weekly by Brian Goldthorpe, Sept 16, 2010

Real Housewives of South Philly

While the Fringe Festival is known for its impressive number of campy works, this highly anticipated performance has gay fun written all over it. No stereotype will be spared as the hilarious crew of the WaitStaff, one of the city’s most outrageous sketch comedy groups, has the “Real Housewives” phenomenon set in its crosshairs. Join creator Sara Carano and the rest of the cast in a no-holds-barred roast of the ladies who made Bravo TV an indelible, if unfortunate, part of pop culture. And the debauchery doesn’t stop with the Jersey wives; this time around the WaitStaff is taking aim at the men in a new sketch on the househusbands. But hold up, put a cap on the excitement. Word is tickets are sold out for both performances. Hopefully, with a little luck and some extra cash to burn, you can still score a seat or two to this remarkably funny show.



by Amanda L. Snyder
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With about a week under its belt, the Philadelphia Live Arts and Fringe Festival — in its 14th season — pushes forward with more shows filled with talent from across the world, including many locals.

This year, the festival's Producing Director Nick Stuccio selected 15 shows for the Live Arts Festival. The Fringe Festival will produce 188 shows free of a selection process.

After performing sketches of "The Real Housewives of South Philly," for the past year-and-a-half, The WaitStaff is devoting almost its entire 60-minute show to the spoof and the many varieties of "The Real Housewives" series at the Fringe Festival.

"I have to admit I got sucked in watching a marathon on Bravo of 'The Real Housewives of New York,'" Sara Carano, the creator, who also plays Marie, said of her inspiration.

While the resident of Ninth and Bainbridge streets originally thought about focusing on Kensington, she decided to go with something she was more familiar with as an Italian from North Jersey herself, she said.

"I find South Philly Italians are really close to North Jersey and New York Italians," she said. "I thought let's put this down on paper and see what kind of hilarity pursues."

The result brought a following for the housewives and The WaitStaff's eighth Fringe show, which will feature the original sketch and two others — including the introduction of the househusbands, which includes Eric Singel of 10th and Mifflin streets as The Duke — through Sept. 19 at L'Etage Cabaret, 624 S. Sixth St.

"The initial sketches were these three women sitting on their stoops just talking about everyone in their neighborhood and gossiping," Singel, an Altoona native, who played a housewife's mother prior to the househusbands' introduction, said.

And while Carano creates the sketches, fellow WaitStaff member Joanne Cunningham, who grew up on the 2400 block of South Lambert Street, keeps her on track if anything she writes doesn't hold true to South Philadelphians' actual behavior or speech.

"She's kind of our dialect coach. She by far does the best dialect than anyone in the show," Carano said adding that Cunningham's parents have even contributed ideas to past shows.

This way, with references to local hotspots, typical front window displays and dishing dirt on others, audience members will be able to relate to the characters.

"You feel like, 'I know that person. That's my neighbor or that's my aunt or that's my cousin kind of thing,'" she said.

And Fringe allows The WaitStaff to reach more people and perform more shows, Singel said.

“We just found out [Sept. 2] our second show this Sunday, is already sold-out and we’re waiting to hear about other shows,” he said.



www.thewaitstaff.com